AX SHARPENED AGAINST HB SLEDGEHAMMER | BEYONCÉ, BLACKNESS AND THE TANNING OF COACHELLA | BEER ENTERS A NEW FRONTIER

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Photo of *Adventures In Public School* courtesy of Newport Beach Film Festival
Design by Richie Beckman

ORANGE FEATHERS »

Operation Desert Stormy

BOB AUL

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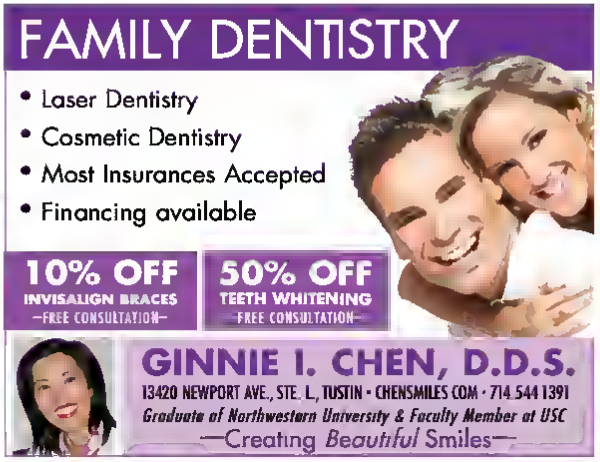

Suing the Sledgehammer

Ocean View School District trustee files lawsuit against Huntington Beach blogger over violent threats, defamation

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Ocean View School District (OVSD) trustee Gina Clayton-Tarvin is as tough as they come, but even she has legal limits. Attorneys for the school board member filed a lawsuit on March 22 in Orange County Superior Court against Huntington Beach blogger Charles "Chuck" Johnson for defamation, harassment and making criminal threats against an elected public official. Johnson runs the HB Sledgehammer, a website whose only real accomplishment is being more vile than the infamous Huntington Beach Community Forum on Facebook.

Even though Clayton-Tarvin has been on the school board since December 2012, the trouble began after she won re-election on Nov. 8, 2016. According to court documents, that's when Johnson started to publish "harassing, hostile, vile and vicious personal attacks" against Clayton-Tarvin on social media and his website that serve "no legitimate purpose and goes far beyond the bounds of constitutionally protected speech." The suit alleges that Johnson repeatedly promised to keep up the conduct for the purposes of intimidating the liberal Democrat into resigning from the board.

Most recently, Johnson attended the March 6 OVSD board of trustees meeting, during which, Clayton-Tarvin notes in a subsequent restraining-order filing, Johnson kept interrupting the meeting with profanity and accusations of her being a liar after she spoke about firsthand experiences with school lockdowns. Armed security had to remove him from the room until his time came to speak during public comments. That's when Johnson threatened to deliver Clayton-Tarvin's "head on a stick." For those who interpret the quote as a belligerent political metaphor, other comments are far more blunt. "Crooked Gina—Be quiet or be killed," Johnson is alleged to have threatened on social media in November 2016. Last August, a blog post on HB Sledgehammer warned Clayton-Tarvin and "the entire Tarvin family": "Gotta sharpen up my ax. Lot of dead wood to clear out."

Filed by the Irvine-based Shields Law Offices, Clayton-Tarvin's suit also alleges that defamatory and harassing statements have been made about the trustee within the past year to harm her personal and professional reputation. She has been called a "whore" who has a "cozy relationship" with an elected official and that their "strange love mews ... are the result of cash or someone tounge [sic] on [his] sphincter." Keeping it classy, Chuckie? Aside from taking a sledgehammer to the English language, the suit claims that by posting a picture of a "Live Nude Girls Girls Girl" establishment directed at the trustee and asking "Does she have a side job?" Johnson implied that Clayton-Tarvin moonlights at a strip club.

Why all the hate? The suit charts Johnson's conduct against Clayton-Tarvin following the 2016 election, but she became the target of greater ire in Huntington Beach in 2015, when she sided with residents of the city's majority-Mexican Oak View barrio in their fight against a garbage dump near the neighborhood and an elementary school. (See Gustavo Arellano's "Stink City: Huntington Beach's Oak View Barrio is Finally Fighting the Garbage Dump Next Door," July 15, 2015.) The school district filed a lawsuit in the effort and settled in 2016. Republic Services, which acquired Rainbow Environmental Services, missed a South Coast Air Quality Management District Dec. 1, 2017, deadline to fully enclose the dump; it now has until May 31.

Back to Clayton-Tarvin's own litigation. It appears Johnson has taken notice. The front page of HB Sledgehammer previously struck a free-speech martyr tone with a picture of a protester holding a sign reading, "We Are the First Amendment." Now, the photo of a man with a blooded nose and duct tape across his mouth greets readers. It's not just imagery suggesting censorship. Johnson also wrote an April 4 blog post about SLAPP (strategic lawsuit against public participation) suits, claiming they are filed for reasons ranging from attempts to silence political critics to "Bat Shit Craziness." A week after Clayton-Tarvin's suit, HB Sledgehammer had more to say. "We vet everything we publish," Johnson wrote. "Nothing false goes out. We engage in satire and wide-open criticism, of inept and unqualified public officials, in the public interest."

But Clayton-Tarvin's lawyers argue that Johnson's threats, posted on the website and communicated elsewhere, violate a number of criminal statutes and that she believes he has "the apparent and present ability to carry out such threats." The suit cites a penal code that anyone who "willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death or great bodily injury" is to be understood as a threat, "even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out." Through legal recourse, Clayton-Tarvin is seeking damages for emotional distress and anguish in an amount to be determined during a trial.

"I am not at liberty to discuss my defense strategy, but I am quite confident that my legal team will be able to expose Clayton-Tarvin as the dishonest, cold, calculating First Amendment assassin that she is," Johnson wrote in a statement to the *Weekly*. "And for the record, by 'assassin,' I don't literally mean that she kills people. I mean that she's literally trying to silence myself and many other private citizens that dare to disagree with her. I am confident that the truth will emerge. Gina Clayton-Tarvin has set in motion legal ramifications for herself that extend far beyond what she ever imagined. My attorneys will be filing a continuation in this case in order to coordinate efforts and bring all aspects of ANTISLAPP law to bear. I'm anxious, yet grateful for this opportunity to expose her once and for all as the hypocrite that she is." When asked who is representing him, Johnson declined to state, noting only that there are "multiple" firms. Recent filings in the restraining-order case show only Chad D. Morgan as his lawyer.

Clayton-Tarvin declined to comment on her suit. Four days after filing, the HB trustee was granted a temporary restraining order against Johnson, the blogger requested a continuance, with the next court date scheduled for early May.

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Slime Baugh

» MATT COKER

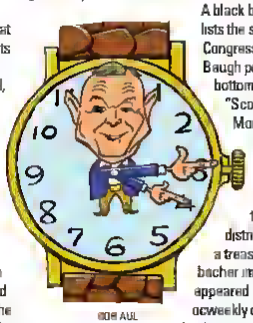
Scott Baugh, the former California Assembly Republican leader and Orange County GOP chairman, should feel honored.

The re-election campaign for Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-Cambridge Analytica) put out its first mailer shining a candidate seeking the incumbent's coastal Orange County congressional seat.

However, the mailer's target is not one of the six Democrats who have been hammering Rohrabacher all year. Instead, it's Dana's former longtime pal Baugh, who only officially entered the race on March 9.

The address-label side of the mailer includes a large photo of Baugh, a smaller one of a cackling Hillary Clinton and these lines: "Lobbyist Scott Baugh Supports Amnesty," "Funded by Never Trumpers" and "The Lobbyist Money Can Buy." An "Approved" stamp indicates supposed Baugh support for "illegals." Instructions along the bottom point voters to "Learn more at Bought-Baugh.com." That site features the same information and an anti-Baugh video commercial that is also posted on YouTube.

The mailer's flipside has a large headline with the words "Meet Scott Baugh and Learn How He Made and Raised Millions," as well as a black-and-white photo of Baugh with a slight smile and a hand on his chin. The image is laid over stacks of U.S. currency, with the binder around the top stack indicating "$10,000." Along the right side of the page are Baugh's supposed positions on Trump (against), taxpayer benefits for the undocumented (for), amnesty for illegal immigrants (for), pollution cap-and-trade and higher taxes (for), and the "D.C. swamp" (ready to join it).



BOB AUL

A black box with small white type lists the sources Rohrabacher for Congress used to determine those Baugh positions. Then, along the bottom, in large type it reads, "Scott Baugh" and "The Lobbyist Money Can Buy."

The one positive for Baugh is Rohrabacher for Congress used fairly good photos of the latecomer to the 48th congressional district race. There is, of course, a treasure trove of goofy Rohrabacher images, many of which have appeared in *OC Weekly* and/or on ocweekly.com, with some having been shot by our own R. Scott Moxley.

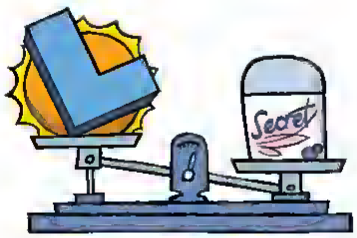
But taking the gloves off is stunning when you consider how close Baugh and Rohrabacher used to be. Make that *Rohrbachers*: Dana's wife, Rhonda, pleaded guilty to falsifying nominating papers for Baugh's campaign before he was first elected to the Assembly in November 1995. The candidate was not charged.

Got Dana Watch fodder? Email mcoker@ocweekly.com

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

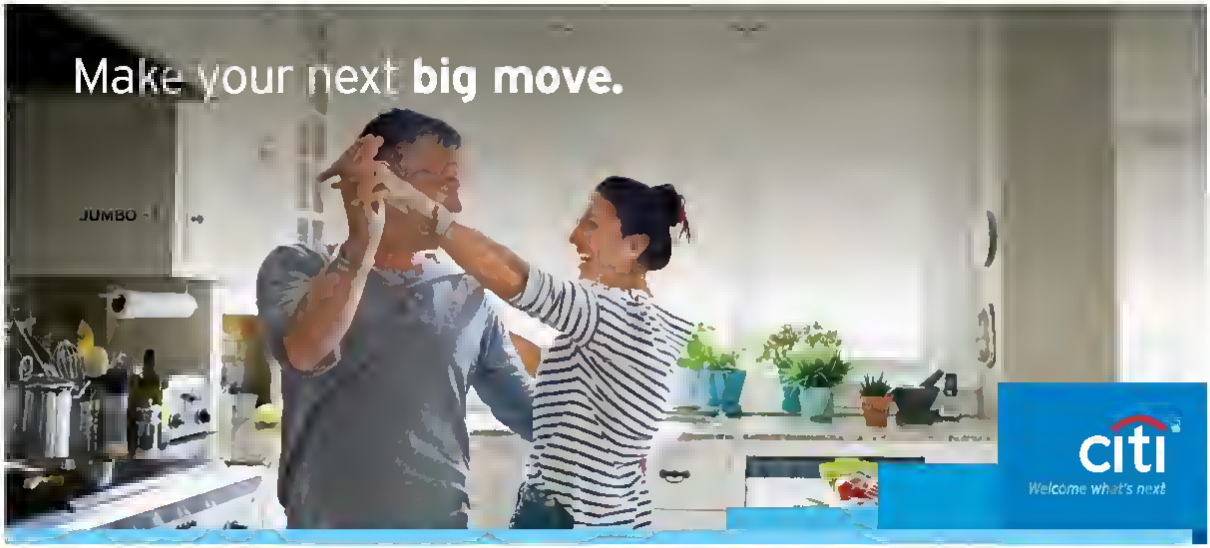
A Lotto B.O.



BOB AUL

You were holding up the line at the liquor store. You had on giant, Coke-bottle-thick glasses and a Marine haircut. You insisted on standing at the counter, scraping Scratcher after Scratcher, determined to win a million dollars before you walked out the door. Meanwhile, the cloud of hot mugginess around you was the opposite of winning. You are how I imagine Pigpen from *Peanuts* would smell in real life. Never mind the line growing behind you while you just stood there, open mouth smacking on your hot dog, leaving a layer of dollar-ticket dust crumbs so thick it looked as if you were whittling a toy boat with a dirty quarter. Finally, after the fifth worthless try, you gave up. "Course I ain't won nuthin' ... here," you said to the unfortunate store clerk. "Yer owner cheats the game so he kin win." Yes, lady, I'm sure he commits a federal offense so you can't win at scratch tickets. Meanwhile, how about next time you spend that $5 on a stick of deodorant?

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.



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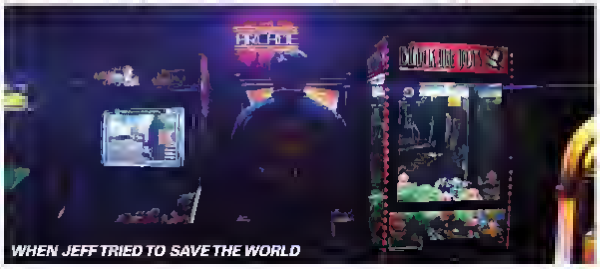
ADVENTURES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL

A SWINGER'S WEEKEND

THE LONG DUMB ROAD


WHEN JEFF TRIED TO SAVE THE WORLD

Newport Beach Film Festival presents its funniest lineup in 19 years

BY MATT COKER

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NEWPORT BEACH FILM FESTIVAL

I have sat through so many films while on the Newport Beach Film Festival (NBFF) beat. Because so many friends and family members know that, I am invariably asked to name my favorite NBFF film. It beats the hell out of me; that would be like choosing a favorite toe.

However, to deal with the oft-asked question concerning Orange County's premier cultural event, I foist a stock answer: Rafa Lara's suffocating drama *La Milagrosa*, which rolled at the fest in April 2009.

Based on a true story, *La Milagrosa* is about a young upper-class man who is kidnapped by a guerrilla group in Colombia. It may not be the best film NBFF has screened, but it is the one that still gives me flashbacks. It's sparse, gritty and unsettling, just like so many other fest flicks I have caught, so why not give it the honors?

Well, because comedy is actually my favorite movie genre, and there have been several worthy comedies (dark and otherwise) at NBFF over the years. For example, I really dug Matt Walsh's *High Road* in 2011. As with the Oscars, funny films, no matter how worthy, just don't achieve favorite status because sobering dramas say something about the human condition, *maaaan*.

This is being brought up because, for the Newport Beach Film Festival that runs Thursday to Thursday, April 26 through May 3, the co-founders and programmers told me in separate conversations that they believe they have come up with the funniest fest lineup in 19 years, which is how old I was when I saw what is truly my favorite movie seen anywhere of all time, *Airplane!* Coincidence?

Gregg Schwenk, the CEO, executive director and co-founder of NBFF, is sitting across from me in one of the fest's large offices near John Wayne Airport, where he repeats something he has told me before previous opening nights: this is one of the strongest programs he and his staff has ever put together. But then he mentions something new.

"Looking at the entire festival, one of the through lines I see are fantastic, exceptionally well-done comedies," he says. "That's one of the things we talked about early on. It's usually extremely hard to find good comedies."

To demonstrate how pervasive the laugh-factor phenomenon is this year, Schwenk points to a 2018 festival film that comes from a place not normally associated with comedy, unless Mel Brooks or *Hogan's Heroes* is mocking it. "The German Spotlight film, *My Blind Date With Life*, is very funny, which is unusual given that the country is not exactly known for producing great comedies," the CEO says.

Moments earlier, as she sat in the same office chair, Sarah Sleeger, the festival's director of programming, also mentioned that. "In the comedy genre," she said, "we've really got a treasure trove."

That likely is thanks to our awful times. Art imitates life, but cinema also lets you escape it. Which explains how a particular year's collection of more than 350 films from around the world can organically include a large chunk seeking hearty belly laughs to exorcise audiences' existential funk.

Or, as Sleeger more simply put it, "People are really looking for comedies these days."

American Animals, the festival's opening-night film, is based on a true story and labeling such an original cinematic hybrid a comedy would be inaccurate. Written and directed by Bart Layton, who similarly blended documentary and subjective storytelling for 2012's *The Imposter*, *American Animals* is about four Kentucky college students' attempted

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

REEL KNEE-SLAPPERS

» FROM PAGE 11

beist of books worth millions of dollars from their own Transylvania University library in 2004.

A hit at the most recent Sundance and South By Southwest film festivals, Layton's film stars Barry Keoghan, Evan Peters, Jared Abrahamson and Blake Jenner as the students—with the actual men they play also popping up onscreen to comment on what is shown, including whether they remember events the same way the film depicts them. While Layton did not make a straight comedy—Sleeger calls it "very unusual" and "very fun"—the filmmaker obviously amuses himself by starting *American Animals* with a title card that reads, "This is not based on a true story" before removing the words "not based on." See what he did there?

Comedy more squarely applies to the festival's closing-night picture, John Hyams' *All Square*, in which Michael Kelly (Frank Underwood's fixer Doug Stamper on *House of Cards*) plays a small-town bookie having trouble collecting on bets. He befriends the son (Jesse Ray Sheps) of his ex-girlfriend, begins taking bets on Little League games to recoup his losses and throws the community into chaos. "It's really, really funny," according to Sleeger.

In the interest of full disclosure, it must be reported here that any opening- and closing-night laughs come at steep prices. *American Animals* is tied in with NBFF's Opening Night Gala, where food from several of Orange County's top restaurants, drinks from Lagunitas, Tito's Vodka and Tequila Herradura, and entertainment from the rock band Side Deal and dance troupe Academy of Villains are served to attendees who paid $225 for the movie and cocktail party or $175 for the soiree alone.

Tickets for the official closing-night screening of *All Square* and accompanying party—which features more grub from local premier restaurants and a hosted bar by Guinness, Tito's Vodka and Oban Whiskey—are $95 or $65 for the gala alone.

You have to be 21 or older to attend any festival party, including the opening- and closing-night galas, and it is requested that you don't dress like a slob. Also know that opening and closing nights generally sell out.

Fret not, paycheck-to-paycheckers. It does not take nearly as much scratch to see the festival's Showcase, Centerpiece or Spotlight films. Tickets for those are $5 to $10 more than the regular $15 festival films, although it's another $45 if you also want to attend their associated parties. Tickets for these categories of films, which are often a cut above, quality-wise, often sell out, so many times the staff schedules repeat screenings later in the festival.

Friday- and Saturday-night Showcases and Saturday-night Centerpieces can be films made anywhere, but Spotlight nights are dedicated to movies from these specific places: Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Pacific Rim (Australia, China, the Philippines, Japan and South Korea), Europe (Italy, France, Germany and Sweden) and Latin America (Chile, Brazil and Mexico). As with opening and closing night, the Spotlight films have associated parties with free-flowing food and drink, although they are more intimate than the blowouts.

Here are some Showcase, Centerpiece or Spotlight comedies (or films with strong comedic elements) I am hoping to see:

Happy Birthday, Toby Simpson. Patrick "Paddy" Makin, who pivoted from war correspondent to television-series writer, makes his feature-directing debut with this rom-dramedy that he also wrote. The NBFF U.K. Spotlight film is about an uptight businessman (Alexander Perkins of Britain's original *The Office*) sneaking into a music festival to retrieve stolen items but finding love and freedom. (April 27 and May 1)

Never Goin' Back. Augustine Frizzell, an actress who is the granddaughter of the late Country Music Hall of Fame singer/songwriter Lefty Frizzell, makes her feature-directing debut with this dramedy she also wrote about two young waitresses (Maia Mitchell and Camila Morrone) in desperate need of a beach vacation. Their plans seem to be spoiled when their house gets robbed, but the pair vows to do whatever it takes to hit the beach. "It's a great comedy," vows Sleeger. "It's as raunchy as male-centered comedies." (April 27)

Boundaries. Shana Feste, who wrote and directed *The Greatest*, *Country Strong* and *Endless Love*, does the same here in a dramedy about a mom (Vera Farmiga) who intends to take her bullied son (Lewis MacDougall) across country to a private school, but she can't afford it. Her father (Christopher Plummer), who gets kicked out of his nursing home for dealing pot, offers to pay for the kid's school if they take him with them. (April 28)

The Long Dumb Road. Jason Mantzoukas cracks me up in everything I see him in, and I have seen him in a lot of things, including *The League*, *Transparent*, *Kroll Show*, *The House*, *Lady Dynamite*, *No Activity*, *The Good Place* and multiple episodes of *Drunk History*. Here, he plays a Texas mechanic who agrees to fix the car of an art student (Tony Revolori) if he can ride shotgun on a road trip to Los Angeles. According to Riki Kuebeck, NBFF festival director, and Matt Keyser, programming coordinator, a "comedy of errors" ensues. By the way, this is our third film in a row from a female filmmaker (Hannah Fidell of *6 Years*, *We're Glad You're Here* and *A Teacher*). Am I hyping the wrong NBFF trend? (April 28 and May 1)

The Unicorn. An engaged couple (Lauren Lapkus and Nicholas Rutherford) celebrate her parents renewing their vows in Palm Springs, where the younger ones learn the secret to the older ones' lasting marriage: threesomes. This was directed, co-produced and co-written not by a woman, but by Robert Schwartzman, who is Jason's brother, Talia Shire's son and Francis Ford Coppola's nephew. (April 28 and May 2)

Another Time. Writer/director Thomas Hennessey follows up his 2014 rom-dramedy *What We Can't Have* with another. Justin Hartley (*This Is Us*, *Smallville*, *Revenge*) falls hard for a woman (played by the leading man's real-life wife, Chrisbell Stause Hartley, who appeared with him on the CBS soap *The Young and the Restless*). The rub: She is engaged to someone else. So, he pays a guy to send him back in time—stay with me here, people; I'm assured this works despite the far-fetched plot—to meet her before she meets the other dude. (April 28)

The Pretend One. The Australian Spotlight has a lonely girl growing up with an imaginary friend in the Outback. He (Michael Whalley) is still with her when she (Geraldine Hakewill) is an adult, but his existence is threatened when she meets a real-life love interest. (April 30)

My Blind Date With Life. Coming in with the highly sought recommendation of NBFF CEO Schwenk is the German Spotlight about a guy losing his vision just as he receives a prestigious internship at a hotel. With the help of a friend, the new intern tries to fool the world into believing he sees just fine. (May 1)

Wife and Husband. The Italian Spotlight is about a neurosurgeon and his TV-host wife with a crumbling marriage that takes an odd turn when a scientific experiment has them switching bodies. "It's very funny and very well done," says Sleeger. "There are interesting insights about what your perceptions are." (May 1)

From the meat and potatoes of the festival schedule, here are the comedies I'm itching to see:

A Swinger's Weekend. Co-writer Jon E. Cohen makes his feature-directing debut with this comedy about a seemingly perfect couple (Randal Edwards and Erin Karpluk) that decides to celebrate their birthdays by swinging with a co-worker and his wife. But their wild weekend is spoiled when a third couple enters the picture. (April 27 and April 30)

When Jeff Tried to Save the World. Napoleon Dynamite himself, Jon Heder, stars as a bowling-alley manager trying to save the place he calls home in this comedy from yet another female filmmaker, producer/co-writer/director Kendall Goldberg. (April 27 and May 2)

Adventures in Public School. Actor Kyle Rideout follows his 2015 feature-directing debut (the psychological drama *Eadweard*, about turn-of-the-century British photographer Eadweard Muybridge) with this comedy making its world premiere at NBFF. It's about the relationship of a smothering mother (Judy Greer of *Ant-Man*, *Arrested Development* and *Married*) and her son (Daniel Doheny) who is socially awkward thanks to home schooling. He must take a test on a campus, where he falls for a girl and purposely flunks so he'll have to continue his studies there. (April 28 and May 2)

Better Start Running. Brett Simon's action-comedy has an eclectic band of misfits fleeing from an overzealous FBI duo who wants them dead or alive. But preferably dead. (April 28 and April 30)

The Bill Murray Stories. The lone documentary on this list is about the legendary comedic actor's penchant for crashing weddings, house parties and other gatherings. Director Tommy Avallone catches

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

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Tasteful CINEMA

Our guide to the 2018 NBFF Culinary Film Series

by Aimee Murillo

For the first time in its epic 19-year history, the Newport Beach Film Festival (NBFF) will include a slate of documentaries and films revolving around the illustrious world of cuisine and the culinary industry. Many of the Culinary Film Series' eight films are global and West Coast premieres, all of them scattered throughout other showcases in the fest's 2018 programming. Seeing as how Orange County's own food culture has come into its own in the past decade, the series is perfect to scoop the local foodie scene into its main audience.

Here's a few notable flicks that'll make your mouth water:

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF NEWPORT BEACH FILM FESTIVAL

RAMEN HEADS

There's no one better to teach us about the Japanese noodle dish than chef Osamu Tomita, the reigning "Ramen King." Here, Tomita leads viewers into the wonderful and savory world of ramen with the help of five Japanese noodle restaurants. They share their award-winning recipes and talk about the history and culture of ramen, as well as Tomita's own delightful passion (or, as the film suggests, *obsession*) for it. (April 30)

ULAM: MAIN DISH

Long relegated to the margins, Filipino food has not only exploded into the American culinary consciousness in the past five years, but it has also become a game changer for chefs across the world. *ULAM* tracks the history of the cuisine, its staples and its inception into the mainstream, but even more important, the film shows how its success gave Filipino chefs a renewed sense of validation as they worked to land respect and prominence from both the wider American culinary industry and the traditional Filipino community. This film screens as the Filipino Spotlight film for NBFF's Pacific Rim Showcase. (April 30)

CUBAN FOOD STORIES

While Cuba has become more accessible than ever thanks to its recent embargo lift, we've barely scratched the surface of the small Caribbean country's culture and customs. From director Asori Soto and the executive producers of *Jiro Dreams of Sushi*, this documentary is the ultimate exploration of Cuba's exquisite cuisine. See the meals and learn about the people making them as they live in a pivotal moment during the country's history. (April 29)

MICHELIN STARS: TALES FROM THE KITCHEN

As the ultimate gold standard of global cuisine, the Michelin Guide is the hallmark of excellence many chefs dream of reaching in their careers. This film is a deep dive into the Guide as seen by the chefs, as well as a perfect dissection of the artistry and perfection that goes into creating high-end meals. (April 30)

AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM

For more info on screenings and show times, go to www.newportbeachfilmfest.com.

REEL KNEE-SLAPPERS

» FROM PAGE 12

up with the strangers who were treated to once-in-a-lifetime encounters with the star. (April 28 and May 1)

The Ranger Who says women can't direct horror? After an impressive career producing mostly horror films, Jenn Wexler makes her feature-directing debut with what Sleeger described as "a punk-rock horror thriller." Teen punkers run from the law and into the forest, where they are confronted by a ranger (Jeremy Holm of *Mr. Robot* and *House of Cards*) with an ax to grind. "It's a horror movie but with funny, comedic elements," says Sleeger. "Gore is ever present as well." (April 28)

Zoo. Toby Jones (*The Girl, Wayward Pines, Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*) plays security guard Charlie in this Irish family film that is based on the true story of a boy (Art Parkinson) and his misfit pals removing an elephant from the Belfast Zoo to protect him as German bombs fall from the sky during World War II. (April 28 and May 2)

Another Kind of Wedding It's the U.S. premiere of writer/director Pat Kiely's dramedy about a fractured family forced to confront what tore them apart at the eldest son's wedding. The cast includes Jessica Paré, who you'll recall as Mrs. Megan Draper on *Mad Men*, Frances Fisher (*Unforgiven, Titanic, Masters of Sex*), Wallace Shawn (*The Princess Bride, My Dinner With Andre, The Haunted Mansion*) and Kathleen Turner. (Yes, THE Kathleen Turner). (April 29)

The California No. Writer/director Ned Ehrhar's comedy is about a listless LA writer (Noah Segan) who discovers during couple's therapy that he is in an open marriage, a revelation that forces him to reconsider everything about himself. (April 29)

Chasing the Blues. Whatever happened to Steve Guttenberg, Tim Kazurinsky and Jon Lovitz? They somehow landed on the call sheet for this comedy from Scott Smith, who directs commercials and indie films. Two rival record collectors (Grant Rosenmeyer and Ronald L. Conner) land in jail after trying to con an old lady out of a rare but cursed 1930s blues record. Once free, the bitter rivals join forces to get the licorice pizza from a more formidable foe now possessing it. (April 29 and April 30)

Destination: Dewsbury In Jack Spring's dramedy, witty banter and crude boyhood humor accompany four middle-aged men on a road trip across the English countryside to see a dying childhood friend. (April 29)

Most Likely to Murder Dan Gregor has appeared on and written episodes for the TV series starring his wife Rachel Bloom, *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*. They team up again for his feature-directing debut, which he also co-wrote. Adam Pally (*The Mindy Project, The President Show, Happy Endings*) plays Billy, a former high-school stud who left home for Las Vegas, where he has convinced his former classmates he is a high roller even though he is really a janitor. He returns to his hometown thinking he can pick up where he left off, but everyone has moved on, including the girl who got away (Bloom). She's now married to the high-school outcast (*Mad Men*'s Vincent Kartheiser), whom Billy is convinced is a killer. (April 29)

Wild Honey. In writer/director Francis Stokes' offbeat rom-com, a down-on-her-luck phone-sex operator (*The Perfect Storm*'s Rusty Schwimmer) falls for one of her clients (*Psych*'s Timothy Omundson), travels to LA to be with him and discovers all is not what it seems. (April 29 and May 1)

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2018 NEWPORT BEACH FILM FESTIVAL at various locations in Newport Beach and Costa Mesa; www.newportbeachfilmfest.com. Thurs., April 26 through Thurs., May 3. Show times and ticket prices vary.

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fri/04/20

[COMEDY]

COMEDY QUEEN
Whitney Cummings

Though she shot to prominence with a hilarious spot on a Comedy Central roast, Whitney Cummings is great at more than hurling an insult or two. Besides her self-titled NBC sitcom, which ran for two seasons, the comedian has been behind two of the most successful network comedies in recent years as the co-creator of *Two Broke Girls* and as the showrunner of the rebooted *Roseanne*. Last year, she released her autobiography, and earlier this year, she appeared on HBO's *Crashing*. But Cummings never lost her passion for standup. A return to the stage will be a great way for fans to laugh along with the brains behind comedy's biggest hits.

Whitney Cummings at Irvine Improv, 527 Spectrum Center Dr., Irvine, (949) 854-5455, irvine.improv.com. 7:30 & 9:30 p.m., also Sat.-Sun. $30. 18+.
—WYOMING REYNOLDS

[FILM]

Come Aboard!
Bus Party to Hell

You're gonna want some good ganja to go with this tongue-in-cheek feature, which stars noted thespian and *Sharknado* star Tara Reid. In this campy horror comedy, a party bus riding into the desert for the annual Burning Man festival breaks down in the middle of nowhere—actually, unbeknownst to the party crew, it's the territory of a satanic cult. There's enough revealing clothing, comedy, hedonistic situations, and blood and gore to sate the so-bad-it's-good movie-lovers out there, with plenty of your typical bad-movie archetypes to conjure up some added laughs. Experience this delirious, sex-crazed apocalyptic masterpiece at the Frida Cinema for just $4.20—and for your weed pairing, may we recommend a strain called "The Devil"?

Bus Party to Hell at the Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 285-9422, thefridacinema.org. 11 p.m. $4.20.
—AIMEE MURILLO

sat/04/21

[FILM]

SHIP AHOY
Titanic

Not since Lucille Bluth capsized it on *Arrested Development* has the *Queen Mary* been so prominently—or ironically—promoted into local pop culture as by the ambitious and fearless Alamo Drafthouse Cinema chain. To get you onboard for their planned high-end, LA-area niche cineplex for smart movie-lovers, Alamo offers this screening of the wonderfully over-the-top 1997 nautical-disaster romance movie *Titanic* right next to the permanently moored liner. Admission includes museum entrance, a self-guided tour and a string quartet to put you in the mood. Insert your own iceberg or necklace joke here while we all hope for a future screening of *Airplane!* at John Wayne Airport.

Titanic at the *Queen Mary*, 1126 Queens Hwy., Long Beach, (562) 499-1739, www.queenmary.com. 8 p.m. $25.
—ANDREW TONKOVICH

[HEALTH & FITNESS]

Bleat and Stretch
Goat Yoga

With the increasing variety of yoga practices in recent decades, one we didn't see coming was Goat Yoga! Spectra Yoga of Costa Mesa is offering limited sessions at Centennial Farm's Millennium Barn, where baby pygmy goats (courtesy of Fountain Valley Cloverdales 4-H Club) will frolic with, climb on and practice yoga with participants. Reportedly started as a birthday-party gimmick in 2016, Goat Yoga has since become a subsidiary of the yoga industry, complementing traditional yogic principles with animal therapy (and hoof massage). This local event also introduces and promotes agriculture to the community. If there's a cuter way to reach body and mind balance and enlightenment, we haven't heard—or *herd*—of it!

Goat Yoga at Centennial Farm's Millennium Barn at OC Fairgrounds, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 436-0576, spectrayoga.com. 10 a.m. & noon. $40-$60.
—SCOTT FEINBLATT

sun/04/22

[THEATER]

Free to Pee

Urinetown: The Musical

When *Urinetown: The Musical* premiered in 2001, the promise of a "not-so-distant future" where a severe drought has resulted in the ban of private toilets was pretty shocking. Now, the thought of a corrupt mega-corp controlling pay-to-pee public toilets ... well, let's just add it to the long list of possible atrocities the government might surprise us with. Depressing, sure, but this is a *musical*, and the kinda-similar threat of a dystopian future is set to a series of comical and satirical songs, which makes this Tony Award-winning play a worthy escape. Free use of the toilet with admission.

Urinetown: The Musical at STAGES-theatre, 400 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 525-4484, stagesoc.org. 8 p.m. Through May 20. $28-$30. —ERIN DEWITT

[EXPOS]

Seeing Green

Green Scene & Garden Expo

This was the first fundraising event Fullerton Arboretum had, and every spring since, the Green Scene & Garden Expo has been the ultimate escape into everything you need to know about keeping up a garden and cultivating your own natural living space. A large array of specialty growers, gardeners, vendors and exhibitors bring a selection of plants, flowers, succulents, gardening tools, garden art, accessories and everything else under that umbrella. Plein Air artists will also be live-painting beautiful, scenic landscapes throughout the day. Walk through, be one with nature, and learn all about being a better friend to plants.

44th Annual Green Scene & Garden Expo at Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton, (657) 278-3407, fullertonarboretum.org. 10 a.m. $8, members, free. —AIMEE MURILLO

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mon/04/23

[CONCERT]

Need Some Fun?

The Drums

You can always expect a riotous good time from Brooklyn-based group the Drums. Led by front man Jonny Pierce, the indie pop quartet bring a hazy punk energy alongside some twisted dark humor. Influenced by late-'80s U.K. pop groups such as the Wake and the Smiths, the Drums' songs carry with them a little more honesty about anxiety, loneliness and heartbreak, but to upbeat instrumental arrangements. Get a fix of the Drums' honest, cathartic music performed in a setting that will make us all feel a little less alone.

The Drums with the Marías at the Glass House, 200 W. Second St., Pomona, (909) 865-3802, www.theglasshouse.us. 8 p.m. $32. —AIMEE MURILLO

tue/04/24

[THEATER]

Phantom-tastic!

Love Never Dies

In 2010, famed composer Andrew Lloyd Webber assured audiences they didn't need to be familiar with 1986's mega-hit musical *Phantom of the Opera* to enjoy its sequel, *Love Never Dies*, which was billed as "a second story with the same characters." Set in 1907, 26 years after Webber's *Phantom*, songbird Christine (now married to Raoul and in dire financial straits) accepts an invitation to perform in America at a new Coney Island attraction called Phantasma, unaware that it is the long-thought-dead Phantom who invited her—gasp! *Love* initially received bad reviews, but multiple revisions subsequently raised the bar, with critics calling the production "a lively and lavish over-the-top melodrama."

Love Never Dies at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787, www.scfta.org. 7:30 p.m. Through May 5. $29-$109. —SR DAVIES

wed/04/25

[LECTURES]

One of the Masters

Beyond the Canvas: Joan Miró

Joan Miró is the surrealist best known for paintings that might seem abstract but aren't, exactly. "I want to assassinate painting," he famously said, and he did it by exploding it into its component parts. In his signature works, shapes and lines and colors form a complicated vocabulary, sometimes reflecting the world around him or a more immediate reality. He painted the famous *Aidez L'Espagne* poster to help the Republicans raise funds during the Spanish Civil War, and later that year, he debuted one of his most striking works alongside Picasso's *Guernica* at the 1937 Paris Exposition: the penetrating and powerful anti-fascist mural *The Reaper*, destined to be lost to history. You'll find out more—such as how he escaped the Nazis in 1940 and what he carried with him—at this presentation by author and lecturer Jacqueline Hahn, M.A.

Beyond the Canvas, Joan Miró at Newport Beach Library, 1000 Avocado Ave., Newport Beach, (949) 717-3800; www.newportbeachlibrary.org. 7 p.m. Free.

—CHRIS ZIEGLER

[CONCERT]

WE'VE MISSED HER

Lisa Loeb

Singer/songwriter Lisa Loeb was one of the many feminine musical voices of the '90s, bringing a refreshing mix of sweetness and cool-girl vibes to mainstream pop rock—and making glasses on girls look hot. The platinum-selling musician hit it big with "Stay (I Missed You)," and since then, she has expanded her career, releasing more hit singles, writing children's music and books, and even launching her own eyewear brand. Now the successful musician, entrepreneur and children's humanitarian is off on a tour to reunite with her beloved fans, making a stop at the Coach House tonight with classical pianist and singing talent Julia Kruegar. And yes, you can bet she'll be wearing her signature black frames.

Lisa Loeb with Julia Kruegar at the Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930, thecoachhouse.com. 8 p.m. $20.

—AIMEE MURILLO

thu/04/26

[POETRY]

AMONG BARDS

An Evening With the Poets

"Oh, beloved Anaheim, city of kindness, home of my youth and, um. . . Mos 2's finest?" Okay, so it's clear I wasn't cut out to be Anaheim's first poet laureate. Thankfully, Grant Hier is up for the job as the town's official troubadour. With April being National Poetry Month, Hier gives the keynote reading at "An Evening With the Poets" at the always-awesome Anaheim Public Library. The wordsmith will be joined by fellow poet laureates such as Laguna Beach's Kate Buckley and Sequoia and Kings National Park's John Brantingham. Other published poets offering readings include Juan Farias Alvarez, Michael Kramer and Selma Mann. There'll also be a book signing. *Carpe diem*, Anaheim!

MORE ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

An Evening With the Poets at Anaheim Public Library, 500 W. Broadway, Anaheim, (714) 765-1880, anaheim.net/302/library. 6 p.m. Free. —GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

[PERFORMING ARTS]

Coming Home

Bone Hill—The Concert

Tour de force Martha Redbone is at the center of this gripping and immersive storytelling show, wherein the acclaimed jazz performer charts her family lineage in the Appalachian Mountains. Part concert, part musical, Redbone and eight other actors present the compelling narratives of four generations of her multicultural roots, among them strong women grounded in the Cherokee tribe. This exclusive show allows viewers to connect with Redbone on a deeper level and learn about some of her fascinating family history, struggles, childhood memories and, most important, the love Redbone has for her ancestral land.

Bone Hill—The Concert at Carpenter Center for the Arts, 6200 Atherton St., Long Beach, (562) 985-7000, carpenterarts.org. 8 p.m. $45. —AIMEE MURILLO

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4/22 WISHBONE ASH

4/23 LISA LOEB

4/26 KIEFER SUTHERLAND

4/27 HAL KETCHUM

4/29 KING'S X

4/19	URIAH HEEP
4/20	OIXIE OREGS
4/21	Y&T
4/22	WISHBOHE ASH
4/25	LISA LOEB
4/26	KIEFER SUTHERLAND
4/2T	HAL KETCHUM
4/2E	ZEPPELIH USA (LED ZEPPELIN TRIBUTE)
4/29	KIHG'S X
5/4	ROGER CLYNE AND THE PEACEMAKERS
6/5	TYROHE WELLS
6/E	COLLECTIVE SOUL
5/E	MAOELEINE PEYROUX
5/9	MESHELL HOEGEOCELLO
6/11	LOS RIOS ROCK SCHOOL
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6/1E	BLOOO, SWEAT & TEARS
5/18	THE EHGLISH BEAT
6/19	LOS RIOS ROCK SCHOOL
6/20	RAT PACK TRIBUTE
6/24	THE POSIES
5/26	OIHGO BOINGO DAHCE PARTY
5/27	CASH'O OUT
6/29	STEPHEH STILLS & JUOY COLLIHS
6/30	STEPHEH STILLS & JUOY COLLIHS
5/31	JOHH MAYALL
6/1	ROBBY KRIEGER
6/2	QUEEH HATIOH
6/7	ULI JOH ROTH
6/E	BEATLES vs STOHES
6/9	THE PETTY BREAKERS
6/10	MARTY MCIHTOSH
6/14	CASEY ABRAM
6/15	JACK RUSSELL'S GREAT WHITE
6/1E	AL JAROIHE - 4 Decades Film Celebrating From the West Coast Song With a Personal Memoir of THE BEACH BOYS
6/1T	Oouo Starrs presents COMEOY HIGHT
6/22	GARY HOEY
6/23	LOS RIOS ROCK SCHOOL
6/27	TEO HUGEHT
6/28	TEO HUGEHT
6/28	SERPEHTINE FIRE (Earth, Wind and Fire Tribute)
6/30	LIVE OEAD & RIOERS '69

5/9 MESHELL HOEGEOCELLO

5/24 THE POSIES

5/29 & 5/30 STEPHEN STILLS & JUDY COLLINS

6/7 ULI JON ROTH

6/15 JACK RUSSELL'S GREAT WHITE

6/16 AL JARDINE

UPCOMING SHOWS

T/7	YOUHG OUBLINERS	8/30	MIOGE URE AHO
T/14	Guitar Legend OICK DALE		PAUL YOUHG
T/15	RITA COOLIOGE	E/1	WILO CHILO
T/18	LITTLE RIVER BAHO	E/7	JUSTIN HAYWARO
T/20	SUPER OIAMOHO	E/21	HERMAN'S HERMITS
T/2E	PATTY SMYTH		feat. PETER HOONE
T/2T	HEHRY KAPOHO	9/22	HERMAN'S HERMITS
8/3	VEHICE		feat. PETER HOONE
8/4	ABBAFAB	E/30	ANHA HALICK
8/5	ROHNIE SPECTOR & THE ROHETTES	10/12	JO SOUTHER
		10/25	TAB BENOIT'S WHISKEY BAYOU REVUE
6/10	GEOFF TATE'S 30th Anniversary of Operation: Mindcrime	11/3	AMBROSIA
6/1E	IROH BUTTERFLY	11/15	THE KIHGSTON TRIO

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Bridging the Gap

Heirloom Farmhouse Kitchen is aimed at millennials and connoisseurs of good food alike

BY EDWIN GOEI

From the outside, the new Marriott Irvine Spectrum resembles another one of Irvine's yawn-inducing office towers. Built with equal portions of glass, steel and concrete, it's a square-shaped skyscraper that's neither tall nor architecturally distinctive. The inside, however, is a different story. Marriott invested its $120 million budget in making it, in its own words, "tech-savvy." But what I keep hearing is that it's designed to attract millennials, who are forecasted to be the group that will spend the most money on travel in the next couple of years.

So what does it mean when a hotel is designed for millennials? From what I saw, it means that parking is valet-only and not free. It means the lobby cedes its space to a lounge-like sitting area with video screens and an exhibit by FastCompany that worships tech innovation and Silicon Valley. It also means that at the highest floor, there's a rooftop bar, and at the lowest, a full-fledged Starbucks.

And then there's the restaurant, which isn't just called Heirloom Farmhouse Kitchen—something that sounds focus-grouped by the marketing department—but it's also described as "produce-forward," a term that seems to be the new way of saying "farm to table."

Whatever it meant, all I cared to find out was if the place were a destination in and of itself or just a last resort for hotel guests who'd rather not leave the premises. But as soon as I saw it, I realized Heirloom Farmhouse Kitchen wasn't just another hotel eatery. There were no defined borders; I couldn't tell where the restaurant began and the hotel ended.

Behind the hostess podium was another lounge area, one as cozy as a hunter's lodge with at least three plush sectionals. Where the fireplace should've been, a cinema-sized video screen made from a series of LCDs bathed everything in light. And to the left, a bar lit on all sides resembled E.T.'s spaceship. The rest of the space sprawled like an amoeba. Since the seats and table types changed from section to section, not one area looked alike. And when I walked in farther, I discovered a separate room for private parties. But rather than being closed off or hidden, it was surrounded by glass.

The menu is a single sheet of paper. On one side were the drinks, including a cocktail called "Master-Planned Perfection," a subtle jab at Irvine itself that made me chuckle. On the other was a list of dishes that, at first glance, were like those of every other new American restaurant.

EDWIN GOEI

I've been to in the past five years. Present were the usual suspects: charred Brussels sprouts, roasted beets, even a mac and cheese. The waiter seemed kind of aloof when I asked him for recommendations.

Then the orders started to arrive. The recommended mac and cheese turned out to not be the usual pasta-breadcrumb-dairy gut bomb, but instead used cauliflower mixed with a Fiscalini Cheddar fondue and bits of bacon and was broiled in a skillet. Everything about this dish worked. The cauliflower not only fully absorbed the flavor of the cheese sauce, but it also tempered its richness. If it was a rebuke of the tired restaurant trope by its chef, Paolo Buffa—an Italian educated in Milan who's been on the Marriott payroll since 2011—it couldn't have been better.

It may also be Buffa's pedigree that explains why the spinach gnocchi was the finest example of potato dumpling I've ever tasted. Light but substantial, soft but toothsome, these heavenly, bite-sized orbs were covered in a velvety sauce with foraged mushrooms, braised short ribs and palate-cleansing roasted tomatoes that burst when I bit into them. It was the second solid recommendation by my waiter, who, by this time, I realized was a great host. He refilled my water without me noticing and asked how I was doing with genuine interest.

But the best thing he did that evening was to steer me away from the skirt steak and toward the Kurobuta pork tomahawk, which turned out to be a spectacle even as it remains one of the lower-priced main entrées. The chop, as thick as the September issue of *Vogue*, came attached to a swooping bone that extended past the boundaries of the plate, easily dwarfing the accompanying roasted fingerlings and carrots. Brined, seasoned, cooked and seared expertly, it was the sweetest, juiciest, most satisfying hunk of pig I've had the pleasure of consuming.

As I nibbled what meat remained on the bone as if it were a barbecue rib, the chop had me re-evaluating the whole scene. If this is the kind of place restaurateurs and hoteliers are building to attract millennials, then bring on the rest! Just leave out the mandatory valet, please.

HEIRLOOM FARMHOUSE KITCHEN
7905 Irvine Center Dr., Irvine, (949) 759-0200. Open daily, 5:30 a.m.-midnight. Small plates and appetizers, $5-$14, main entrées, $18-$42. Full bar.

WHAT THE ALE
» SARAH BENNETT

A New Frontier

LONG BEACH BEER LAB
516 W. Willow St., Long Beach, (562) 270-3253, lbbeer.com.

Hops and weed might look alike, smell alike and even taste alike, but it wasn't until recently that local brewers started exploring the aromatic possibilities of combining these two green, resinous flowers.

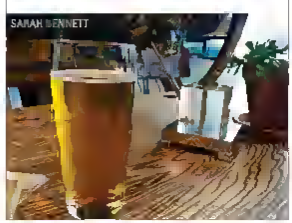
Last summer, downtown LA's Concrete Jungle Brewing Project opened with a lineup of old world and new-school beers, including an IPA now called Hashtag 710, infused with an over-the-counter version of the non-psychotropic part of the cannabis plant, CBD. Around the same time, the effortlessly experimental Transplants Brewing in Palmdale released an IPA with hop hash and hemp CBD. Called CatBirD (get it?), it used Columbus, Summit and Idaho 7 hops to evoke the flavor and aroma of your local dispensary's finest, while also offering a modest dose of CBD.

But Long Beach Beer Lab coined a whole new term when it started "dry terping" some of its hoppy beers earlier this year. Terpenes are aromatic hydrocarbons usually derived from fats and alcohols that are found on the oily exterior of some plants. It's the plant's essential oil, so to speak, and it can smell like anything from lavender to cloves. When you get into the hops-weed family, these terpenes all hang out in the same dank-citrus zone, which is why they tend to taste and smell similar.

Long Beach Beer Lab brewmaster Levi Fried has made at least four "dry terped" brews, meaning they were given a dose of aromatic cannabis terpenes after fermentation, just as you would with oily, fresh hops when dry hopping.

Last month at the Beer Lab, there was an IPA brewed with resinous, piney CTZ, Azacca and Centennial hops that was dry terped with Sour Diesel terpenes. On draft during this weekend's pretty-official weed holiday are two dry-terped gems: Larry's OG Lager offers Larry OG terpenes with piney, herbaceous Saphir hops, and Just the Terp was dry hopped with 007, CTZ and Centennial hops, then dosed appropriately with more Sour Diesel terpenes. Happy 420!

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM



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Springtime Delights

Our guide to great seasonal menus

BY ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN

Not too hot, not too cold. Spring is just right in our book. It's also the time of year when restaurants flaunt seasonal menus. Grab a fork and join us!

MEMPHIS CAFE

Chef Diego Velasco's Southern-style home cookin' is always a solid meal, and this spring, he's changing things up. "You will see seasonal interpretations of our classics alongside dishes focused on presentation and fresh flavors that highlight the various regions of American cuisine," he says. Roasted beet poke mimics the trending seafood with sesame, hazelnuts and gorgonzola. The pickled-shrimp salad toes the line of healthly and heavy thanks to chicories, crispy tasso ham, smoked paprika vinaigrette and biscuit (what?) croutons. We also suggest the pan-roasted chicken with haricot vert, Cajun creamed corn and chicken andouille sausage. *2920 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, (714) 432-7685, www.memphiscafe.com.*

MONTAGE

In a recent partnership with nutrition expert and best-selling author Kelly LeVeque, Montage dining outlets the Loft and Mosaic Bar & Grille now include Be Well by Kelly menus, designed for guests wanting to maintain a healthy lifestyle while visiting the resort. Dishes include a wild French salmon salad, a Southwestern scramble and a lemon-garlic roast chicken. LeVeque's celebrity clientele and UCLA/ UC Berkeley post-graduate clinical nutrition education mean a focus on quality and overall wellness. Expect this ongoing collaboration to adjust with the seasons. *30801 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-6000, www.montagelagunabeach.com.*

THE RECESS ROOM

Even though no one's referring to it as a spring menu, the Recess Room is serving new items. We loved the pork cheek confit, as it reminded us of Filipino adobo, but an honorable mention goes to chef Nikko Marquez's Spanish octopus with matcha crispy quinoa and Okinawa potato. Another fine dish, the seared duck breast with soba and scorched rice tea. *18380 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, (714) 377-0398, therecessroom.com.*

SNOOZE, AN A.M. EATERY

A favorite brekkie spot, Snooze's new selection of eats recently dropped to the tune of strong Kentucky Coffee and an eclectic soundtrack. Do yourself a favor and drop by the Market Place location for some grub *Über*-indulgent eats such as I Want Sum'oa Cakes (signature pancakes topped with vanilla crème anglaise, caramel, chocolate sauce, coconut and powdered sugar) pretty much demand a *siesta* afterward. Lighter fare include the Spring Harvest Benny with cheesy quinoa cakes and a Spring Has Sprung frittata filled with mushroom and asparagus. *3032 El Camino Real, Tustin, (714) 415-6269, snoozeeatery.com.*

CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

Mix-and-Match Heaven

Trio Thursday at Brunos Italian Kitchen

You come to Brunos Italian Kitchen for two things: well-executed Italian fare (all the pasta is made in-house) and the lounge. The downtown Brea eatery offers daily specials and hosts happy hour every night—ideal for getting your evening started or a post-theater bite. But what you want to head here for is Trio Thursday.

The generous $15 deal allows you to mix and match three appetizers and drinks, including Brunos' signature cocktails and any beer or wine by the glass. Try the arancini, lightly fried risotto balls filled with savory ham, fresh herbs and gooey mozzarella that are served alongside a vibrant marinara. Fragrant herbs, citrus and oil help to intensify the briny flavor of the house marinated olives. Pair any of the above with an Al Capone old fashioned, a heady mixture of Templeton rye, Averna amaro liqueur, maraschino and Angostura bitters, and you have yourself the perfect *appertivo*.

EatThisNow

» CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

BRUNOS ITALIAN KITCHEN
210 W. Birch St., Brea, (714) 257-1000,
www.brunosbrea.com

DrinkOfTheWeek

» CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

El Guapo at Tempo Urban Kitchen

With a happy hour offered Monday through Friday, Tempo Urban Kitchen has one thing on its mind: *puro pinche pan*. Its *chingon* bartenders are crafting house cocktails that are robust, precisely made and easy to enjoy on a scale between refreshing and spirituous. Plus, they specialize in the agaves, so snag a seat at the bar and consider starting here with El Guapo.

THE DRINK

At its base, El Guapo is a smooth blend of double-distilled Maestro Dobel Silver tequila, muddled serrano chiles and a touch of smoky Ancho Reyes liqueur (made in Puebla, Mexico, from ancho chiles steeped in a sugar cane spirit). The herbaceous notes from the tequila are enhanced with fresh lime and lemon juices for a perky cocktail with a bite. Order the fish ceviche (a $5 steal during happy hour) with your second or third round. *Salud!*

TEMPO URBAN KITCHEN
1060 Imperial Hwy., Brea, (714) 529-2900;
tempourbankitchen.com

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OC WEEKLY Bulletin

Feature your photo here!
Submit to ocweekly@ocweekly.com

Upcoming Events

California Wine Festival, April 20 -21
At this sunny seaside setting, California's best wineries pour hundreds of vintage red & whites, complemented by dozens of the region's top chefs and specialty food purveyors serving gourmet appetizers along with live music and an ocean view. Use code OCWEEKLY to save 10% off your ticket. CaWineFestival.com

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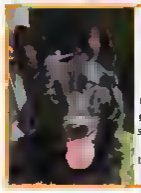

GIA

Gia is a magnificent big boned 5 year old girl who is incredibly smart. This girl needs a job to do! She is very strong and active and requires someone with previous shepherd experience. Gia knows many commands and she is eager to please. She is not good with other dogs or cats, so requires a home where she can be the queen. Gia would thrive in a home that understands the complex nature of the German Shepherd. To learn more about her, please visit gsmc.org

Featured This Week

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COURTESY OF THE NEWPORT BEACH FILM FESTIVAL

Uncanny Cinema

Fantastic films not to miss at this year's Newport Beach Film Festival

BY AIMEE MURILLO

A genre that has been skyrocketing in popularity in the past year is science fiction, evident in the steady rise of television shows, films and programs available through online-streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime. *Blade Runner 2049*, *Bright*, *The Lure*, *The Void*, *Altered Carbon*, *Legion* and *The Handmaid's Tale* are just a number of titles released in the past year that come to mind.

For this year's run of the Newport Beach Film Festival, there isn't a specialized sci-fi showcase, per se, but there's still an interesting array of fantastical films that bring some otherworldly storylines to the big screen. While we can only hope for a sci-fi-specific series in the future, there's still plenty of visionary, out-of-this-world flicks that consistently prove how bold and exciting NBFF's programming is every year. Clear your schedules for these mind-bending, surreal flicks.

3ft Ball and Souls. As the Japanese Spotlight film part of the Pacific Rim Showcase, this spellbinder by Yoshio Kato focuses on four strangers who met through a suicide-centric internet chat room called Life Club (um, ironic). They decide to meet up to fulfill their fatal wishes through an orb-shaped explosive triggered by a detonator and located in a cabin in a remote forest. But instead of going off when detonated, they're cast in a *Groundhog Day*-like scenario in which they're sent back in time to moments just before the explosion happens. Is this supernatural intervention a new chance at life, or is it another hell to escape from?

Wife and Husband. For the Italian Spotlight flick, this *Freaky Friday*-esque comedy drama surrounds a neurosurgeon and his television-host wife who are going through marital struggles. The husband, who has been experimenting with a mind-altering device, hooks himself and his wife up to his machine to hopefully give each other some perspective into the other's mind, but he accidentally switches their identities entirely. As they try to maintain appearances and carry on each other's lives, they learn some deeper secrets about the other that puts their entire relationship in a tailspin.

The Ranger. From director Jenn Wexler comes this horror thriller reminiscent of drive-in Grindhouse movies and espousing a clear love for '80s campy horror. A group of young punks commit some low-brow crimes in their town and retreat to the forest to throw off police on their trail. While they relax, let their guard down and take copious hallucinogenics, they unwittingly make themselves vulnerable to a mad, ax-wielding forest ranger who recognizes one of them from years before and who decides to get his revenge.

Another Time. In this romantic drama, a young, successful man falls for a young woman who is already engaged to someone else. Unable to cope with the heartbreak, he decides to invest all his money with an inventor who claims he can build a time-traveling device, which the young man plans to use to go back in time to meet his beloved before she meets her current boyfriend. Along the way, he's faced with having to make more life-altering decisions than he expected.

Closer Than We Think. Jet packs! Flying cars! Robot butlers! Television watches! The vision for the future our society has collectively constructed over the past half-century is partly because of the burst of postwar futurism that radiated through pop culture and the work of artist Arthur Radebaugh. This doc analyzes the illustrations, advertisements and "Closer Than We Think" comics by Radebaugh, as well as how they drew our optimistic expectations toward a futuristic utopia.

Kusama: Infinity. The life and art of Yayoi Kusama has always been beyond anything ordinary, as the Japanese artist's famed installations bring joy and wonder to all those who visit them. Kusama has been an active artist since the '60s pop art movement, and since the 1970s, she has been voluntarily living and producing work from a Japanese mental institution. This film is a wonderful look at the life and struggles of Kusama and how she turned her hallucinations and mental issues into bold, reality-escaping art.

American Animals. This opening-night feature seems extraordinary just by its experimental storytelling methods, which shakes up the usual based-on-a-true-story thriller. Four young men attempt to steal one of the most valuable art books in the United States from their university library. Documentary and narrative are juxtaposed to give context to each friend's motivations, and through their individual perspectives, each one starts to question the purpose of fulfilling the heist. It stars *American Horror Story*'s Evan Peters, Barry Keoghan and Udo Kier.

A Day. This Korean Spotlight film is a dark thriller wherein a doctor returns from a procedure abroad and comes across a deadly accident scene, realizing that his young daughter is one of the victims. His horror turns to suspense as he begins to relive the day over and over again, hoping to change the outcome of the day's tragic events.

AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM

For more information on screenings, show times and tickets, go to www.newportbeachfilmfest.com.

Lasso of Hell Yeah

BY MATT COKER

Borg vs McEnroe. Janus Metz Pedersen's multilanguage, internationally co-produced 2017 sports biopic is set during the 1980 Wimbledon Championships. *The Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., April 19, 2, 5, 7:30 & 9:45 p.m. $7-$10.*

Valhalla Rising. Danish filmmaker Nicolas Winding Refn's 2010 death-metal-fueled medieval odyssey. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., April 19, 2:30, 4:30 & 7 p.m. $7-$10.*

***High School Musical* Marathon.** Warning: You really, *really* have to be a fan of director Kenny Ortega's franchise to sit through all three films in one day/night. *Cal State Fullerton, Titan Student Union Titan Theatre, 800 N. State College Blvd., Fullerton, (657) 278-2468. Thurs., April 19,* High School Musical, *4 p.m.;* High School Musical 2, *7 p.m.;* High School Musical 3, *10 p.m. Free.*

Seeing Strange Again: Experimental Documentary as Practice. It's "a screening of short Latin American experimental films and conversation with Luciano Piazza." *UC Irvine, McCormick Screening Room, Humanities Gateway 1070, Campus and West Peltason drives, Irvine, (949) 824-6117. Thurs., April 19. 5 p.m. Free.*

Laguna Art Museum at 100. The premiere of Dale Schierholt's artumentary chronicling the museum's history. *Laguna Art Museum, 307 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach, (949) 494-8971. Thurs., April 19, invitation-only VIP reception, 6 p.m., screening, 7 p.m. Free with museum admission ($5-$7; children aged 12 or younger, free)*

Inside Out. A happy, hockey-loving 11-year-old Midwestern girl experiences the basic emotions inside her gradually coming to life. *Fullerton Public Library, 353 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 738-6327. Thurs., April 19, 6:30 p.m. Free*

Living the Change: Inspiring Stories for a Sustainable Future. Writers/directors Jordan Osmond and Antoinette Wilson unveil the inspiring stories of people changing their lives and communities in sustainable and regenerative ways. *Peter & Mary Muth Interpretive Center, 2301 University Dr., Newport Beach, (949) 923-2290; www.NewportBay.org. Thurs., April 19, 7 p.m. Free*

The Rite and the Dance: A Cinematic Celebration for Creation. Gordon Wilson traverses the planet "basking in God's masterpieces." *Edwards Aliso Viejo Stadium 20, 26701 Aliso Creek Rd., Aliso Viejo, (844) 462-7342; Edwards Big Newport 6, 300 Newport Center Dr., Newport Beach (844) 462-7342; Edwards Irvine Spectrum 21, 65 Fortune Dr., Irvine, (844) 462-7342; www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., April 19, 7 p.m. $10-$12.50.*

The Exhibition Room Silent Film Series. Fine spirits and Roxanne's delightful hors d'oeuvres are served. *The Exhibition Room—Long Beach Craft Cocktails, 1117 E. Wardlow Rd., Long Beach, (562) 826-2940; www.theexhibitionroom.com. Thurs., April 19, 8 p.m. $40*

Imitation Girl. Natasha Kermani's 2017 sci-fi flick stars Lauren Ashley Carter in two roles. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., April 19, 10 p.m. $7-$10.*

November. Rainer Sarnet's award-winning surrealist fantasy drama won the Best Cinematography Award at this year's Tribeca Film Festival. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri.-Thurs., April 20-26, 2:30, 5 & 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.*

Human Flow. Ai Weiwei's powerful visual expression of massive human migration. *UC Irvine, McCormick Screening Room, (949) 824-6117. Fri., 4:45 p.m. Free*

Senior Thesis Cycle 5 Film Screenings. Titles are subject to change, and the films are also live streamed. (Go to the website below, scroll to the screening event and click the link.) *Chapman University, Dodge College of Film and Media Arts, Marion Knott Studios, Folino Theater, 283 N. Cypress St., Orange. (714) 997-6765, chapman.edu/dodge/. Fri., 7 p.m. Free*

Bus Party to Hell. Tara Reid stars as a party girl on a bus full of fellow sex-crazed young adults bound for Burning Man. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 11 p.m. $4.20.*

Purple Rain. The Artist plays The Kid, the leader of Minneapolis club band the Revolution, who uses music to escape a tumultuous home life. *Art Theatre, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435. Fri., 11 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

International Ocean Film Tour 5. First, over 120 minutes, see ocean adventure and/or environmental short films. Next, fire questions at Henry C. Lystad, producer of the International Ocean Film Tour, and Sandy Trautwein, interim vice president of Husbandry and curator of Fish and Invertebrates at the Aquarium of the Pacific. *Art Theatre, (562) 438-5435. Sat., 11 a.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory. See one of the late, great Gene Wilder's best performances. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat.-Sun., 11:30 a.m., Sun., 2 p.m. $7*

Searching for Simón Bolívar: One Poet's Journey. Celebrate Poetry Month with Jose Sanchez-Hs documentary. *Museum of Latin American Art, 628 Alamitos Ave., Long Beach, (562) 437-1689. Sat., 2 p.m. $10.*

WARNER BROS

The Greatest Time to Be Alive: A Gospel Patrons Film Night. Watch four short films, engage in meaningful conversation, and end the night at a "hip" coffee shop. *The Frida Cinema, gospelpatrons.org. Sat., 6:30 p.m. Free.*

Trolls. The 2016 animated family adventure comedy is projected onto a 20-foot inflatable screen, so bring a blanket or low lawn chair. *Hurless Barton Park, 4601 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda. (714) 961-7192. Sat., 8 p.m. Free.*

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Shadow cast Midnight Insanity performs in front of the screen. *Art Theatre. (562) 438-5435. Sat., 11:55 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

Straws. Linda Booker's documentary on a movement that first caught traction around here in Huntington Beach. *Art Theatre, (562) 438-5435. Sun., 10:30 a.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

A Plastic Ocean. An audience Q&A with a guest to be named follows this special Earth Day screening. *Art Theatre, (562) 438-5435. Sun., 11:30 a.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

The Cat Returns. Hiroyuki Morita's 2002 anime has Haru saving the King of Cats. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Sun., 12:55 p.m. (dubbed in English from Japanese); Sun., 7 p.m. (in Japanese with English subtitles); Wed., 7 p.m. (dubbed) $12.50.*

The Royal Opera House: *Carmen.* A new production of Bizet's passionate opera. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, 25471 Rancho Niguel Rd., Laguna Niguel, (949) 831-0446 and Regency South Coast Village, 1561 W. Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701. Live, Sun., 12:55 p.m., encore, Tues., 7 p.m. $17*

Love & Bananas: An Elephant Story. Ashley Bell's documentary on a daring 48-hour, 500-mile mission across Thailand to free from captivity a 70-year-old blind Asian elephant. *Art Theatre. (562) 438-5435. Sun., 2 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

The Neon Demon. Aspiring model Jesse moves to Los Angeles, where her youth and vitality are devoured by a group of beauty-obsessed women. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sun. 5:30 & 8 p.m., Mon.-Tues., 2:30, 5:30 & 8 p.m. $7-$10.*

Fragments of Truth: Can We Trust the Bible? Craig Evans travels the globe to track down the most ancient New Testament manuscripts. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Tues., 7 p.m. $12.50.*

Cobra Kai* Premiere Featuring *The Karate Kid. It's a cinematic tag-team match that opens with the original 1984 movie followed by the premiere of the first two episodes of the new YouTube Red series. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Wed., 7 p.m. $12.50.*

The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez + I Am Joaquin. *I Am Joaquin* was selected by the National Film Preservation Board for preservation in 2010 and was restored by the Academy Film Archive. So was the 1982 feature film that follows. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Wed., 7:30 p.m. Free.*

Guys and Dolls. Marlon Brando, Jean Simmons and Frank Sinatra star in Joseph L. Mankiewicz's 1955 musical. *Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. $9.*

Wonder Woman. It's the 2017 smash hit about an Amazonian warrior in training, who leaves home to fight a war—and discovers her full powers and destiny. *Fullerton Public Library. (714) 738-6327. Thurs., April 26. 1 p.m. Free.*

Army of Darkness. Celebrate the 25th anniversary of its U.S. release. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., April 26, 8 p.m. $15.*

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Pacificlandia

A diverse lineup takes center stage at the Pacific Playwrights Festival

BY JOEL BEERS

Twenty-one years ago, the following names graced the inaugural Pacific Playwrights Festival (PPF), South Coast Repertory's foray into the mostly uncharted (at least on the Left Coast) waters of new plays: Richard Greenberg, Anthony Clarvoe, Cusi Cram, John Glore, Jessica Hagedorn, Howard Korder, Chris Van Groningen, Karen Zacarías.

Okay, okay, that was *supposed* to be a list of predominately white men, juxtaposed with the 21st installment of the PPF, which is this weekend, in which the batting order of eight playwrights consists of one white guy with a penis and seven other writers who are either people of color or people without a penis. But here's the thing: Even back when white men ruled every conceivable roost—the halcyon days of the late 1990s, for those keeping score—the PPF was diverse, with 33 percent of the rookie class women and 25 percent people of color.

It's just a wee bit more diverse these days. Of the seven plays—five readings and two full productions—four are written by women, and there is an African-American and Asian American among the men. Of course, race and gender are subordinate to the quality of the writing, but Kimberly Colburn, SCR's literary director, admits it doesn't pain her to see so much diversity. "Obviously gender is certainly part of our equation, but we're not explicitly looking for it," she says. "But as long as we're close, I appreciate it. But while I don't see a [festival] that is solely white men again, the stories are just as important as the playwrights."

SCR has always been a theater where words reign paramount. Plays are not chosen for this festival or the theater's mainstage productions based on politics, social concerns or similar hot-button issues. But that doesn't mean that inadvertent themes don't manifest. "We never program with a theme in mind, we're simply looking at the best plays," says Colburn, who, along with associate artistic director John Glore and fellow literary-staff colleagues, spearheads the selection process. "But we want to try to make sure to have a healthy mix of aesthetics, content and playwrights. But it's only after the fact, whether it's the audiences telling us about the connections they see or ones that we see, that a pattern emerges."

And the theme this year?

"Love and relationships," Colburn says. "All the readings and, to a lesser extent, the full productions, all tackle the interpersonal as a way to take on larger issues."

So, for instance, *Poor Yella Rednecks*, Qui Nguyen's follow-up to his wildly successful

POOR YELLA REDNECKS CAME FROM THIS: *VIETGONE*

DEBORA ROBINSON/SCR

2016 play *Vietgone*, which was part of the 2015 PPF, re-introduces the couple who fled war-ravaged Saigon in the 1970s, but now they are five years into their relationship and their immigrant status as an Asian-American family living in rural Arkansas. They are raising their child, as well as living with a mother who doesn't speak English, and in exploring that family dynamic, the play touches on broader concerns.

The same with Kevin Artigue's *Sheepdog*. Though it seems ripped from whatever passes as headlines these days, Artigue's play about a white cop shooting an unarmed African-American isn't just the local news. His girlfriend happens to be an African-American police officer, and the shooting not only opens perilous political and racial windows, but it also puts their relationship in the cross-hairs.

The most obvious relationship-centric play is also Colburn's favorite, since she serves as its dramaturg: *Love and Contracts*, a new work by a rising theatrical presence and giant robot fan (seriously, that's what it says on her website) Julia Doolittle. "Well, we obviously try to treat all the plays fairly, but that's my favorite," Colburn says. "She is a young playwright, but she is a really exciting new voice. She has an uncanny ear for dialogue, and her plays are so reflective of her personality. She is so engaging and self-deprecating and whip-smart. It's not always true that you draw a straight line from a playwright to their work, but in her case, you certainly can."

Love and Contracts begins with a couple in the 1790s but then fast-forwards, with no explanation or apologies, to the present day. "You see the same characters operating in the same time [periods], and as you watch them navigate how modern relationships work, you see how much has changed and what hasn't. But it also makes a parallel with how relationships are like a contract and how it might be necessary to talk about the details of that contract, how it's better to be transparent and upfront about things, which isn't always the case."

The fourth reading, Caroline V. McGraw's *I Get Restless*, is another piece rife with relationship, as a newly married woman gets struck by a car and loses her memory of the past six years—the entire time she has been with her husband. When she wakes up, she has no memory of the man who introduces himself as her husband, and the play "is about what happens when you lose your story, lose your anchor, and you have to renavigate all those things."

The final reading, Madhuri Shekar's *House of Joy*, isn't about one relationship, but rather about hundreds of them. It's set "in a time like 1666 in a place like India." in a prince's harem. Besides the ruler and a few eunuchs, the women do not interact with any men, and even though they are little more than slaves, they are protected by the prince, so they are afforded liberties and freedoms that most people in the society can only dream about. The arrival of a doctor, however, upends the less-than-delicate balance, and, according to Colburn, the play turns into a romantic swashbuckling adventure, equally fast and funny.

PACIFIC PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL at South Coast Repertory, 655 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-5555, www.scr.org. *Poor Yella Rednecks*, Fri., 1 p.m.; *Love and Contracts*, Fri., 4 p.m.; *Sheepdog*, Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2:30 p.m.; *I Get Restless*, Sat., 10:30 a.m.; *House of Joy*, Sun., 10:30 a.m. $5-$18.

ARTSOVERLOAD

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April 20-26

"A NEW HOPE: THE *STAR WARS* ART OF ROBERT BAILEY". The Lucasfilm-endorsed artist brings a plethora of graphite renderings that were originally commissioned by George Lucas. Open Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Through Oct. 13. Free. Hilbert Museum, 167 N. Atchison St., Orange. (714) 516-5880; www.hilbertmuseum.com.

"CALIFORNIA SPIRIT". A collection of colorful, vibrant paintings and drawings by Colin Fleck and Kortney Ray Diamond. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Through May 31. Free. saltfineart, 346 N. Pacific Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-5554; saltfineart.net.

"CHRISTY MATSON: ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS". The artist combines her ceramic and textile works into woodrous, almost painterly images. Thurs., 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; Fri.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Through May 13. $6-$7 every Thurs., 3-8 p.m., & Fri., free. Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 439-2119; lbma.org.

"COMICS, ANIME, CARTOONS AND FANTASY". Group exhibition of comic artists and/or works inspired by comic and animation art. Open Thurs.-Tues., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Through April 27. Free. Las Laguna Gallery, 577 S. Coast Hwy., Ste. A-1, Laguna Beach, (949) 667-1803; www.laslagunagallery.com.

***DANCE ESCAPE*.** An annual showcase of original dance performances choreographed by UCI's graduate dance program. Sat. 2 & 8 p.m., Sun. 8 p.m. $11-$18. Claire Trevor Theatre, 4000 Mesa Rd., Irvine. (949) 824-2787; www.arts.uci.edu.

"EL EXPLORATORIO- ZONE I—BEYOND THE LIMITS AND THE PROCESSES OF CREATION". A series of contemporary works examine how artists can build on or appropriate scientific and technological advancements in creative fields. Open Wed. & Fri.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Thurs., 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Through July 29. $2; every Sun., free. Museum of Latin American Art, 628 Alamitos Ave., Long Beach, (562) 437-1689; www.molaa.org.

"GMUNK/MISCELLANY". Designer/director GMUNK presents a collection of miscellaneous works in a broad range of mediums. Open Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Through April 26. Free. LCAD Gallery, 374 Ocean Ave., Laguna Beach, (949) 376-6000; www.lcad.edu/gallery/college-gallery/.

***GOOD PEOPLE*.** Written by Pulitzer Prize winning writer David Lindsay-Abaire, this dramedy follows a struggling young woman who reconnects with a high-school flame in her South Boston hometown. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m., Sun., 3 p.m. Through May 20. Call for ticket prices. Chance Theater, 5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim. (888) 455-4212; www.chancetheater.com.

"100 WOMEN AND MORE". Red (a.k.a. Tracy Sagalow) presents more than 100 portraits painted on wooden panels. Open Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Through May 7. Free. Fourviins Hall Art Gallery, Soka University, 1 University Dr., Aliso Viejo, www.soka.edu.

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OC WEEKLY'S BRAND STORY
**SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION*

The Tanning of Coachella

Beyoncé, blackness and the collision of cultures

BY NICK NUK'EM

BEY HIVE

CHRIS VICTORIO

In 2011, music executive and advertising guru Steve Stoute released the book *The Tanning of America. How Hip-Hop Created a Culture That Rewrote the Rules of the New Economy*, in which he analyzed how black culture permeated mainstream America, going as far as proposing its swell helped Barack Obama get elected.

Stoute and his readership may be the least surprised by the history-making dynamics of Coachella 2018, where Beyoncé became the first black woman to headline the festival nearly 20 years into its existence. A decade ago, Prince became the fest's first black headliner, putting down a performance still talked about today. Other men of color who've headlined include Jay-Z, Dr. Dre & Snoop Dogg, Kanye West, and Drake (who might have come the closest in attracting the dynamic found throughout the Empire Polo Grounds this year).

As the talent booked at Coachella evolves from its heavy rock roots of the past to mirror what is considered cool today, the acts become blacker—as does the audience. Afros, blowouts and crisp lineups clustered across the grounds more than any other time in the festival's history, as noted by regular attendees. There were aunties hanging out to hear Daniel Caesar perform or see Nile Rodgers and Chic play childhood staples in living color. Others sarcastically twerked to drum and bass tracks with an aptitude that further distinguished them from the majority of the crowd. One girl hilariously threw up devil horns while an EDM track played.

"I'm loving it because black people do it better. So they got on their goddamn Beyoncé outfits," one African-American woman said. Though it was her third Coachella, her cousin Danielle, of Desert Hot Springs, was among those at the fest for the first time this year. Danielle spoke highly about the opportunity to get to know herself and music better.

It was Coachella veteran Vince Staples' first experience playing the festival's main stage—or, as he called it, "the white people stage." During his sundown slot on April 13, he said, "Thank y'all for having my skinny black ass up here. I know y'all don't know who I am 'cause none of y'all look like me, but I don't give a fuck."

Air-conditioned hideouts such as the Absolut Openhouse heard DJs drop the needle on tracks from Crime Mob, Missy Elliott and Too $hort, all function favorites that kept the space packed throughout the weekend. Such music choices displayed the house's understanding of today's cultural climate. "The vibe we give is the vibe we get from the festival—what they want to feel, what they're enjoying—so we want to make sure that comes across at the tent," says Carmen Muhammad, the public-relations manager for Absolut Vodka. "Hip-hop is what is hot, and people enjoy it. It's another kind of music genre that everybody can get into for the most part, so why not?"

Attendees venturing into the Silent Disco following each night's performances ran into DJs serving tracks from BlocBoy JB and Ty Dolla $ign. Much of the festival's experience molds to the shape of the country's hottest scene. And considering the lengths some travel from around the world to join the fun, the impact seeps out, magnifying the significance of the moment.

Considering the past 12 or so months in black entertainment, with films such as *Girls Trip* wildly exceeding box-office expectations and *Black Panther* breaking records, as well as Kendrick Lamar and Migos hitting No. 1 on Billboard charts, Coachella is right on time with its choice to embrace the zeitgeist.

When Beyonce was revealed as a headliner last year (which she had to back out of because of her pregnancy), a friend of mine told me that billboards and advertisements for the festival could be found in Atlanta, the current hub for black culture, leading one to believe this uptick in Afro representation was intentional. And since Goldenvoice need not worry about ticket sales, as Coachella sells out every year, the only reason for leaning so hard into this lane could be to maintain relevance.

That relevance continued following Beyoncé's rattling recent set, when she was responsible for each of the Top 10 trending topics on Twitter and the subject of most Instagram and Snapchat stories.

One ticket broker shared with me that this year's price was the highest it's been during the 15 years he's been buying tickets for the event. Online, a VIP pass for the first weekend was on sale for $9,000, marked up nine times from its original price. Without a doubt, names such as David Byrne, Jean-Michel Jarre and A Perfect Circle enticed buyers enough to pay above retail for entry, but the demand for this year's shows is steeped in the booking of names such as Cardi B, Migos and Beyoncé and white acts performing black music such as Eminem and Post Malone.

As this "tanning" has taken hold of culture and intensified, Queen Bee has also evolved into a de facto pro-black figure, sharing the layers of her ethnicity with her diverse fanbase and empowering those who speak and look like her. The song "Formation" unapologetically laid that out and brought forth the most controversy she's faced in her career. As with many black women before her, Beyoncé has come to symbolize the pinnacle of black success. Her upholding of all things black during her April 14 show marked another win for the culture.

Titling her performance the "Beyoncé Homecoming Show," she tapped into the rich history of Howard University and other historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), recruiting a marching band equipped with dancers to back her throughout the night. She even donated $100,000 to HBCUs in the wake of her performance. Yoncé also flew Greek letters in the spirit of black fraternities and sororities, flanked by faux members yelling and stomping, bringing to life films such as *School Daze*, *Drumline* and *Stomp the Yard*.

Arrangements mashed her slew of solo hits with some of those same tracks being played at the Absolut Openhouse, including C-Murder's "Down for My Niggaz," F.L.Y.'s "Swag Surfin'" and Yung Joc's "It's Goin' Down," further pushing open the door into the culture.

Coachella's power comes largely from its ability to host important moments on its stages. This year, the fest continues with its championing of a scene that has worked its way from the bottom rungs of society to the hottest ticket in town.

Whether it was a Destiny's Child reunion or Dr. Dre's cameo during Eminem's set, legendary occasions manifested themselves on the polo grounds.

The hot sauce shaken onto Coachella 2018 brought a welcomed flair, creating a dynamic that, on the surface, seemed to work swimmingly. But will those vibes be as welcome in the future? Where does the show go from here?

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Cheers for Vinyl Nerds

Stereo Brewing Co.'s passion for records is always on tap

BY CJ SIMONSON

As I sit with Rick Smets in the taproom of Stereo Brewing Co. in Placentia on a late Friday afternoon, a series of precursory warnings gets thrown my way from the regulars at the end of the bar.

"Don't bring up Tool."

"No Dave Matthews either. And he hates Beastie Boys."

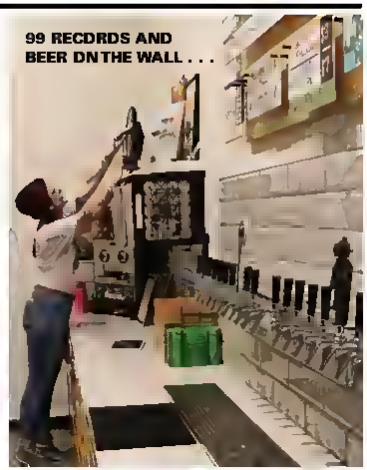
"Alice in Chains and Soundgarden, too!"

All this comes right after Smets has loudly yelled, "We're not a Journey bar, sorry! I stopped believing a long time ago," a statement the regulars acknowledge as part of Stereo's gospel while also rolling their eyes. The whole interaction is *Cheers*-esque in its delivery. Smets' music opinions are solidified and well-known—Stereo's owner likes what he likes, a hardened vinyl nerd who has spent a lifetime listening to and forming opinions about music.

This conversation is happening as we congregate over a pile of vinyl records Smets has procured from below the turntable that sits next to the brewery's beer list. Coming off a peak year for vinyl's comeback, bars and breweries including Gunwhale Ales in Costa Mesa and El Indio in Santa Ana have begun to embrace the physical medium to curate a different kind of experience.

Stereo Brewing doesn't offer a standing "vinyl night," but only because records are playing on any given day. The mood is mostly curated by Smets and the several hundred records he has both behind the bar and in the back office, though patrons and regulars are encouraged to bring in their own albums for a spin. Among the collection Smets is sharing during our meeting are Stephen Malkmus and the Jicks, indie-surf rockers Sonny & the Sunsets, the Pixies, and Leonard Cohen, whose album *Death of a Ladies' Man* has served as the brewery's closing-time LP since it opened. For the most part, patrons seem to understand the vibe and bring in records that reflect it.

"Records are fun and interactive, and we wanted to convey this tremendous love for music. So we created a clubhouse where we drink beer and listen to records together." As Smets says this, he peeks down the bar at everyone who was making fun of his dislike of Tool and Soundgarden, indeed, more music discussion has unfolded. "My taste is very eclectic, but also I'm sort of a music snob," he says. "You'll never hear Top 40 in here. It's not what I want to listen to, and it's not what the people that come here want to hear."



CJ SIMONSON

Stereo's commitment to vinyl extends to the recent vinyl-swap night. Held in early April, the taproom allowed people to bring in CDs, cassettes, mixtapes and, most important, vinyl to trade with other music-lovers. Smets hopes to make the event a regular occurence. "It makes the music part of our vibe tangible, more than just pressing play on a playlist," he says.

"We wanted to bring vinyl in strictly because it's my hobby," Smets adds. "When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is put on a record. When [Smets and his wife, Amanda Pearce Smets] were deciding what we wanted to name the brewery, I was living in a little one-bedroom place in Morro Bay, with a thousand records on a shelf, a record player, a TV, another thousand records on a different shelf, and a couch." He pauses and smiles. "I guess it had to finally come around to Stereo Brewing Co."

The concept of a night when you can bring your records into a place, have a beer and enjoy those songs with friends will likely become less and less novel, but at Stereo Brewing, it will always be central to its DNA. Just don't bring in Journey.

STEREO BREWING CO
950 S. Via Rodeo, Placentia, (714) 993 3390, www.stereobrewing.com

JONATHAN PHAM

Friday

ARSENAL EFECTIVO–10:30 p.m., $20 all ages. The Observatory 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

CARTER WINTER–7 p.m., $15, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL–5:30 p.m., $33.60, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

THE HIGGS, THE ALPINE CAMP–8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarercm.com

LOSTBOYCROW, PRELOW, DYSN–9 p.m., $14, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

Saturday

BAD BUNNY–11 p.m., $30, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com

COAST MODERN, MIKEY MIKE, THE PALMS–8 p.m., $13, all ages. The Constellation Room, 2503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.constellationroom.com.

PUSCIE JONES, GINGER ROOT–8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com

TURNSTILE, TOUCHE AMORE–6:30 p.m., $19, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

Sunday

CHIEF BEEF–8 p.m., $20, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com

ESPRESSO, BIG FUN, LUNCH LADY; GUILTY FLESH–8 p.m., $5, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

TIMEFLIES–5 p.m., $20, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.constellationroom.com.

HAYMAKER; BEDLAM KNIVES; 21 GUN SALUTE; THE UNKNOWN; THE LOWLIFE SOUNDSYSTEM–2 p.m., $5, 21+. Alexs Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

ZZ TOP–7 p.m., $65, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

Monday

SWEET NOBODY, JORDAN LOVELIS, THE KICKSTANO BAND–8 p.m., free, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com

Tuesday

THE LONGSHOT–8 p.m., $27.50, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com

NAV; 88GLAM–8 p.m., $36.75, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com

Wednesday

HAYLEY BIYOBO–8 p.m., $20, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

LISA LOEB–8 p.m., $20, all ages. Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930; thecoachhouse.com

MATT MCCLUER, OREAM PHASES; CREATURES CHOIR, SENO MEDICINE–8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

Thursday, April. 26

BIG MONSTA, KILO BRAVO, BELLA NOVELA, ORANGE BLOSSOM SPECIAL–8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

BUNBURY "EXTOUR 17 18"–7 p.m., $65, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

JOYCE MANOR–8 p.m., $20, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com

KIEFER SUTHERLAND–8 p.m., $30, all ages. Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930; thecoachhouse.com.

SINISTER SIX, ASSQUATCH, THE SWORDS OF FATIMA, SLAUGHTERHOUSE–8 p.m., $5, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anahnim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com

SLAUGHTER TO PREVAIL–7 p.m., $12-$14, all ages. Chain Reaction, 1652 Lincoln Ave, Anahnim, (714) 635-6067, www.allages.com

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Down There

Background: I, a 21-year-old male, enjoy receptive fisting. I've also had constipation problems all my life. Question: I saw my doctor recently, and he tried to link my enjoyment of anal sex to my constipation. (Granted, I didn't tell him EVERYTHING I do down there.) My understanding was that there was an causal relationship, assuming no serious injuries occur. Is there something I don't know? Was my doctor just trying to be helpful?

Fearing Inner Sanctum Tarnished

"There are many myths about anal sex, but this is the first time I've heard this one," said Dr. Peter Shalit, a physician in Seattle and a member of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association.

It's also the first time I've heard anyone associate fisting with constipation—typically, when fisting is mentioned in the same sentence as constipation, FIST it's as a cure. But it's a myth that fisting cures constipation. Of course, along with anal sex being inherently dangerous.

"Fisting is a safe activity, provided that both the top and bottom are sober at the time," said Dr. Shalit. "It does not cause damage or constipation or any other type of bowel problem. The same applies to other anal sexual activities including anal receptive intercourse (getting fucked) and use of toys (dildos, vibrators, etc.) for anal stimulation—again, assuming this is voluntary on the part of the bottom and that both partners are not under the influence of mind-altering drugs during sexual activity." (For safety's sake, of course, buttfuckers should use condoms, and gay and bi men should get on PrEP.)

While many people engage in anal play while under the influence of drugs or alcohol and most emerge unscathed, uninfected and un-constipated, FIST getting fucked-up before fisting is not a butt-sex best practice. A fucked-up top can quickly become an out-of-control top, and a fucked up bottom can be numb to feelings of discomfort that mean "slow down," "stop and add more lube," or "stop altogether."

Despite the fact that millions of people safely engage in anal play, many people believe that anal play does irreparable harm to the anus—or the soul—and that sadly includes many doctors.

"There is a misconception that these activities can cause damage by stretching or tearing the tissue, when actually the anus is very elastic and much of the 'permission to enter' actually involves intentional relaxation of the muscles by the bottom," and not force applied by the top, Dr. Shalit affirmed. (The top applies gentle pressure, while the bottom breathes, relaxes and opens up.)

"If a person suffers from constipation, that should be addressed as its own problem and not blamed on any type of anal sexual activity," said Dr. Shalit. "In addition: For obvious reasons, it's not fun to bottom if you're constipated, so it would be good to have this problem evaluated and treated by a nonjudgmental health-care provider who understands that anal penetration—by fist, penis or dildo—does not cause constipation."

Finally, FIST your doctor was misinformed, which is not helpful. If you don't feel comfortable telling your doctor EVERYTHING you're doing "down there," you can find a new doctor—one you can breathe, relax and open up to (in a different way)—under "find a provider" at GLMA.org.

I'm a 35-year-old straight male, engaged to my girlfriend of eight years. While we have a good sex life, she often won't let me finger or lick her. When she does, she enjoys it and easily climaxes while receiving oral sex. But her highly brain functions get in the way, as she has internalized our culture's body shaming. She has likened me "sticking my nose down there" to "sticking my head in the toilet." Whenever I sexy-talk about licking her, she reacts with a mood killing "eww." But she says she would enjoy it if she could let me. I can't make heads or tails of it! When we have sex, she cuts foreplay short and gets straight to penetration. Since her pussy is not yet fully aroused and wet, we use lube, and I climax long before she does. She feels pleasure and moans, but she really does not value her own orgasm. But I do, and I miss seeing her climax! I wish I could help her overcome her body issues—but when I "use my words," she feels pressured and can't relax. I am at a loss. Please help!

Loves Inhibited Carnal Killjoy

You could go with a grand, romantic, slightly demented gesture. LICK. Clean the toilet, and then stick your head in it to make a point about cleanliness making all the difference—and since the vagina is a self-cleaning organ and your girlfriend showers (so her labia, clit, taint and butt are clean), you should be able to stick your nose down there.

Or you could use your words—but don't use them when you're about to have sex, LICK. Do it at a neutral time (a time when you can't have sex), so she doesn't feel like you're attempting to initiate by raising the subject. First, ask her if she enjoyed oral when she allowed you to go down on her. (Remember, the fact that she climaxed isn't proof that she enjoyed it. Her orgasm is a physiological response; her pleasure is a combo of psychological responses and physiological responses.) If oral is pleasurable for her when she can allow you to go down on her, figure out what was different about those times. Had she just stepped out of the shower? Was she a little tipsy or high? Did you go down there without asking, which didn't give her higher brain functions/inhibitions a chance to kick in? (Please note: *Not* asking isn't an option for new partners or new moves.)

If you can figure out what worked and why—freshly showered, mildly buzzed, no questions asked—you won't have to stick your head in the toilet to prove a point.

My boyfriend and I just got back from Berlin, and we had a great time—until the last night. There was a dark room in the basement of this gay bar, and my boyfriend wanted to check it out, and I did not. We are monogamous for now—I'm open to opening things up down the road—and I didn't see the point of going down there. I told him that drunk in a gay bar at 3 a.m. wasn't the right time to open up our relationship, and he angrily insisted he wasn't trying to do that. But if we're monogamous and want to stay monogamous, why go into a dark room at all?

Dude Into Monogamy

If it was your boyfriend's intent to reopen negotiations about monogamy while horny men circled you in a dark room, DIM, that wouldn't be okay. But it is possible for monogamous couples to enter sexually charged environments like dark rooms, sex parties or swingers clubs and emerge with their monogamous commitments intact. It's advisable, even—or at least I've advised monogamous couples who want to keep things hot to visit those kinds of spaces. Go in for the erotic charge, soak it up, then plow that energy into each other. So next time, go down there. You might have to bat a few hands away, but once the other guys realize you two aren't there for anyone else, they'll turn their attentions to others who are.

On the Lovecast *(savagelovecast.com), poly expert Cunning Minx. Contact Dan via mail@savagelove.net, follow him @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org.*

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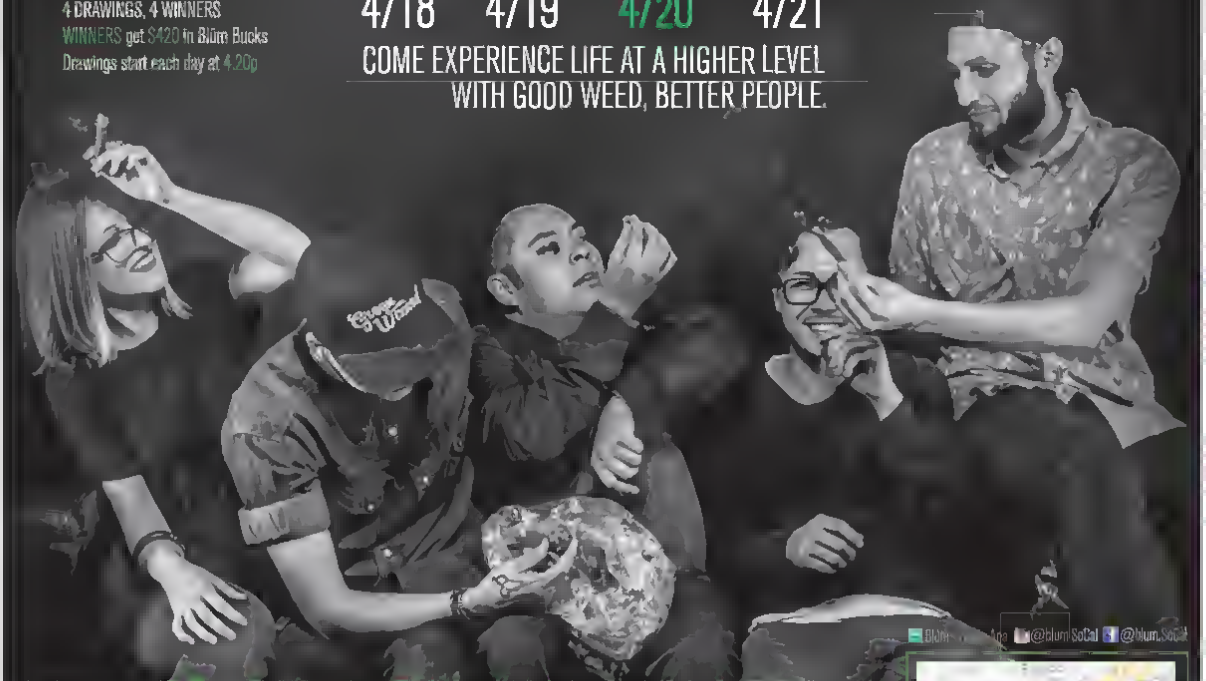

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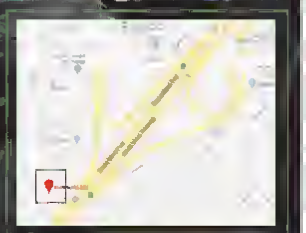

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There is a loophole, however. If a dispensary already had edibles above 100 milligrams in stock before Jan. 1 (or if an edible company had them made prior to that date), then it's okay to sell them until July 1, which is the official cut-off for high-dose edibles.

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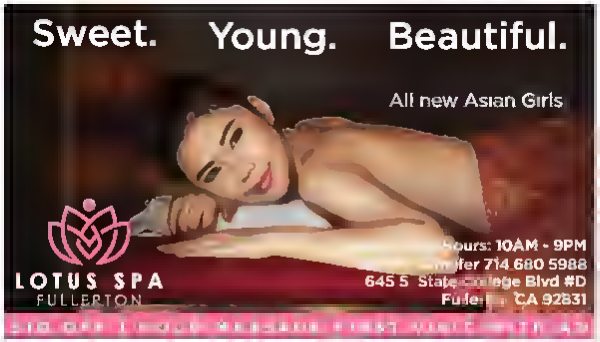
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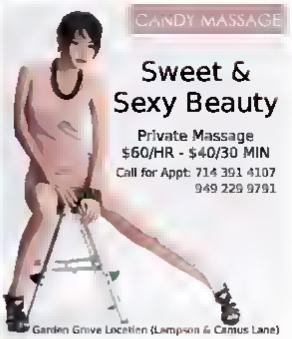
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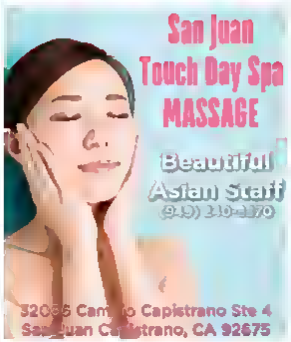
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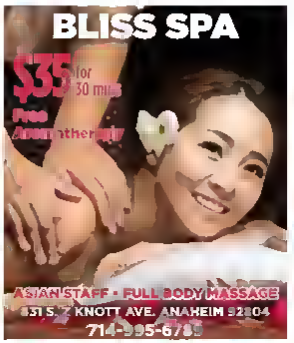
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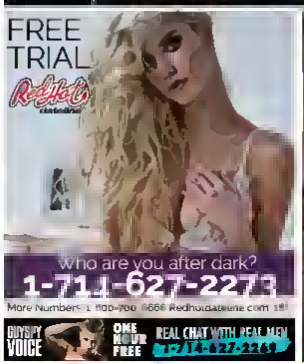
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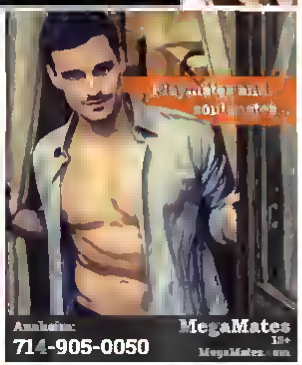
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Happy Coachella

From flowers to 4/20 to Coachella, April is a month of magic

BY MARY CARREON

April is a magical month. It's the first month of spring, meaning poppies and wild flowers color California's hillsides. It's the month the unofficial international day of weed is celebrated, which is a big deal this year considering it's the first rotation of **4/20** under the state's new legislation. April's also the commencement of festival season, in which **Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival** hosts a double-weekend kick-off celebration of pop culture, music, food and art.

If any other music festival started the season it wouldn't be the same. Coachella isn't even the first festival of the year—**South By Southwest** in Austin technically is—but it was the event that set the music-festival trend aflame. I mean, how can lineups with **Paul McCartney, Prince, Madonna, Radiohead, OutKast, Jack White, Portishead, Air,** etc. not be infectious to music-lovers around the world? Plus, its location adds an otherworldly element to Coachella's magic. Between the vibrant pink, orange and purple sunsets and the night sky spangled with stars, the desert makes it hard to not fall in love with music, the people you're with and life in general.

This is my ninth consecutive year attending Coachella. I don't think I've done anything else in life for nine consecutive years aside from living and attending school. I don't love the lineups these days as much as I used to. There's no comparing Prince or Sir Paul to **Tha Weeknd** or **Calvin Harris**. But I still find myself returning to the **Empire Polo Fields** each spring—even when I'm only stoked to see one person on the lineup. I've contemplated why it's so hard for me to say no to this festival, and the same two reasons always come to mind: 1) It changed my life, as I'd found my open-minded, music-loving people, and 2) I've witnessed the strangest things of my life at Coachella.

And I say that having been to **Burning Man**, the land of the sexually free and steampunk acid trippers named "Thumper." I've attended **Lightning In a Bottle**, the home of dreadlocked vegan hippies who smell like patchouli and gather dirt under their toenails because they don't own shoes, who walk around while munching a bag of magic mushrooms, popping molly and snorting ketamine for three days straight. I've gone to **Austin City Limits**, where no weed existed on the festival grounds and everyone was piss-whiskey-drunk to the point they seemed as if they were on Quaaludes. I've also been to **FYF**, where attendees openly discuss with strangers the Adderall they just sniffed off their hand.

But I've had two experiences at Coachella that top all of that combined. The first one took place in 2011. It was Sunday, day three, and the desert sun cooked festivalgoers in 106-degree heat—you didn't even need drugs to hallucinate. But that was the year the godfather of electronic music, **Sven Väth**, played the **Sahara Tent**. I've never been much of a dance-music fan, but this was Sven's first performance in America, so I had to check it out. With the exception of the die-hard ravers who swarmed the front barrier and danced as if the heat were a non-issue, the Sahara was oddly empty for his set.

Two girls sharing a **Minute Maid Frozen Lemonade** walked through the Sahara Tent, also amazed at how empty it was. Making their way to the opposite side of the Sahara (where I was sitting), a raver in a ripped T-shirt pulled away from the swarm of people around the barrier to do some high-speed breakdancing. After a spazzy cartwheel kick, he noticed the girls walking by, lunged toward them, and ripped the frozen lemonade from their hands. He then scooped up some of the lemonade and snorted it up his nose. He threw the rest of the treat on the ground and proceeded to breakdance like a psycho. The girls screamed in horror at what happened—and so did I.

What tops watching a drugged-out dude snorting frozen lemonade he stole from innocent passersby? On day three of Coachella 2015, I was backstage at the **Do Lab**, sitting with friends and having a beer at the tables. For those who don't know, the Do Lab is a psychedelic art structure you go to when you want to get sprayed with water (it's often a refuge from the heat), find people who will share their weed with you, and dance to electronic music with girls wearing fringed bikinis and lots of body paint. It's also the place where you'll find some of those aforementioned patchouli-soaked, dreadlocked, vegan hippies.

MARY CARREON

A young woman with sun-leathered skin sat at the table adjacent to me. She looked flustered and totally in her own world. Her hands were adorned with spectacular rings, one of which was an amethyst that seemed to be radiating violet celestial beams. (Or maybe it was something in the beer?) I was drawn to tell her I liked her ring. She smiled at me and shyly said, "Thank you." I went back to listening in on the conversation between my friends. About three minutes later, she tapped my hand and said, "I like your ring, too. Is that a carnelian stone?"

I confirmed it was and told her I was impressed she could identify what stone it was (I am a mineral/crystal nerd). "I have something to show you," she said. She pulled out a makeup bag, opened it up and took out another, smaller medicine bag, which she unzipped to display an oval-shaped, red carnelian stone. She reached out and put it in my hand, whispering, "This has been in my vagina a number of times. My name's Matilda, by the way."

I looked over at my friends who were knee-deep in conversation and were unaware of what was going on at my end of the table. I then looked at Matilda and scream-laughed. What else do you do in that situation? As I handed the stone back to her, I said, "Matilda, it's really wonderful to meet you." She put the stone back in the medicine bag, which was returned to the makeup kit and dropped into in her massive tote. She then skipped away.

I had no place to wash my hands. My friends had no idea what had happened. I honestly didn't really understand what had happened either. But it was one of the weirdest interactions of my life. Another April memory I won't forget as long as I live.

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